

Accordingly, applicants have reviewed claims 1-18 and determined that claims 2, 8-10, 15, and 17 are drawn to the first species using selective nitridation, and that claims 3, 11-13, 16 and 18 are drawn to the second species using selective oxidation.

Applicants hereby elect for prosecution on the merits the first species using selective nitridation, as represented by claims 2, 8-10, 15 and 17 and as represented by generic claims 1, 3-7 and 14.

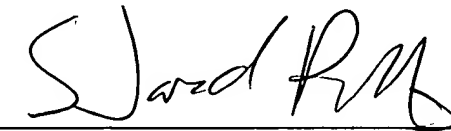
Applicants request that claims 3, 11-13, 16 and 18 thus be withdrawn pending a prosecution of the generic claims on the merits. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to request consideration of the non-elected claims 3, 11-13, 16 and 18 upon allowance of a generic claim.

If any fees, including extension of time fees, are due as a result of this response, please charge IBM Corp Deposit Account No. 09-0456. This authorization is intended to act as a constructive petition for an extension of time, should an extension of time be needed as a result of this response. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if this would in any way advance the prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: February 20, 2001

By



S. Jared Pitts  
Reg. No. 38,579

**SCHMEISER, OLSEN & WATTS**  
18 East University Drive, #101  
Mesa, AZ 85201  
(480) 655-0073